Local schools happy to receive donations from SN

by Sarah Hubbard, Sensors Directorate

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — As the Air Force Research Laboratory's Sensors Directorate updates their computer systems, local schools update as well. School districts and private schools within Montgomery, Clark, Greene, Butler, Warren, Miami, Darke and Preble counties have received more than 150 pallets of computer components donated by AFRL.

"Every three years, each computer within the Sensors Directorate is replaced so our scientists and engineers can work on the most up-to-date equipment," said Grace Janiszewski, program coordinator.

The Pentium I and II computers being replaced are given to the school districts for math and science purposes in the classrooms.

"The computer systems donated to us have allowed us to expand our technology classes," said Jack McIntosh, Technology Director of Northridge Local School District. "They have also expanded the number of opportunities that we can offer students and increased the number of students served."

The directorate started the year-old program as incentive encouraging students to become more interested in math and science-related fields. The students can use the computers, or they can take them apart and study the parts of the computer, Janiszewski said.

A patch panel is utilized to connect multiple computers or servers together using an Ethernet cable. Northridge High School students are provided a bare patch panel that they must wire. To verify their work, two or more computers must communicate with each other. (Air Force photo)

"We use the computers in our A+ and Cisco classes," McIntosh said. "In these classes, the students take the computers apart and rebuild them and, if they successfully complete the class, they get to take the computers they have built home with them."

Northridge Local School District also has a community outreach program that tutors students. The computers are a great resource for the kids being tutored, McIntosh said.

And it's not just the large school districts that benefit from this program. Our Lady of the Rosary School is a small private institution, kindergarten through eighth grade, located in old north Dayton.

"The donations of the computer systems and parts will allow us to offer a broader technology base for each of our students," said Mrs. Cindy Todd, Rosary Computer Lab teacher. "We have even been able to form a 'Programming Club' and some of the students are learning how to build and troubleshoot computers. The students learn what is involved in the assembly of the computer and what is involved in the software installation."

"Once we have received a response from the interested districts, I email the inventory list out to everyone and it is first come, first serve. It is a very fair process that allows all schools to get a chance to put in their requests," Janiszewski said.

Teachers from the participating school districts say their classes benefit greatly from the computers.

"The people at AFRL were extremely helpful and generous about helping us in any way possible," McIntosh said. "The staff here at Northridge greatly appreciates this opportunity to expand our technology department, as I am sure other schools do as well." **@**